(b) and (c) Yes, Sir. The testing kit is based on DNA technology for rapid detection of typhoid infection from patient's serum.

(d) and (e) The kit developed by Defence Research Development Establishment, Gwalior has been evaluated in AIIMS in limited samples. The results are satisfactory. To sort out a few unanswered question, a further study for one year starting June, 2003 is being taken up.

Pesticides in mineral water

4519. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA :
SHRI AIMADUDDIN AHMED KHAN (DURRU) :

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Ministry released a statement right after pesticides were found in mineral water that the water was according to the standards set by BIS;

(b) if so, whether the standards set by BIS mention that harmful pesticides should be present in the water; and

(c) if so, the reaction of Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA) : (a) to (c) In response to a calling attention motion in Lok Sabha on 20-2-2003, a statement was made by Hon'ble H.F.M. in the Lok Sabha.

Requirement of pesticide residues prescribed under PFA Rules, 1945 and by BIS in their standards in Packaged Drinking Water and Mineral Water should be "below detectable limits", when tested in accordance with the specific methods as prescribed by BIS in their inspection and testing scheme, which can detect upto 0.01 mg. of pesticides per litre of water. The Ministry of Health, in consultation with BIS, is considering the revision of these standards.

Interference of DG in drug control matters

4520. SHRI MUNAVVAR HASAN :
SHRI KHAN GHUFRAN ZAHIDI :

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that DCGI has made a complaint to the erstwhile Minister over the excessive interference by DG in drug control matters; and

(b) the action being taken to correct the situation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Question does not arise.

Contamination of vegetables

4521. DR. ABRAR AHMED :
SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA :
SHRI SANJAY NIRUPAM :
SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE :

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether water contamination has led to high levels of lead, copper and zinc in vegetables grown and sold in Delhi and some other parts of the country;

(b) whether such vegetables are injurious to public health ; and

(c) the steps Government have taken to check the menace?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA) : (a) A study was carried out at Delhi and Varanasi by Imperial College, London in partnership with (i) Shrshti, Delhi University; (ii) Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi; (iii) Development Tracks, New Delhi and (iv) Indian Agriculture Research Institute to assess the level of heavy metals in vegetables and to develop simple techniques, which could reduce heavy metal from these vegetables.

The studies revealed that vegetables crop are often grown in polluted and degraded environmental condition in the urban fringe zone and are subject to further pollution from vehicles and industries during marketing.

The outcome of the studies in brief are as follows :

"Fresh vegetables samples of cauliflower, okra, spinach were found to contain heavy metals higher than the permissible limits, as defined by PFA Act, 1954."

A proportion of heavy metals in spinach samples were present on the surface of the leaves. After one washing 20 per cent contamination is reduced and aftersecond wash, it is reduced by approximately 50 per cent.